4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

842 remove the charm. If an Albanian, having lost his first wife, marries a second in what the relatives of the deceased may consider indecent haste, they revenge themselves upon him by pouring water upon the grave of his dead wife, in the belief that this will have the effect of causing his second spouse to be childless.

761 751 Among the Christian Tosks, if two or more children of a family have died in infancy, the next born baby is passed three times through a kind of iron tripod. If yet another child dies, the next baby is placed where four roads meet, a silver cross, for which nine women who bear the name of Maro have given the metal, is laid on its body, and the first passer-by is [608] asked to be godfather or godmother to it.

782 In some places, the neighbourhood of Dibra, for instance, black sheep are said to be sacrificed by witch-wives for the benefit of sick persons. Similar sacrifices appear to be now substituted for those of human beings, who, in the popular traditions of the Albanians, [491] as in those of other nations, are said to have been formerly buried under the foundations of important buildings;[1] for Von Hahn relates that, during the present century, when a new bridge was about to be built by the Governor-General's orders over the rapid river Arcen, twelve sheep were sacrificed, their heads being buried under the piers, in order that they might be able to withstand the force of the current.

789 731 When swarms of locusts or cockchafers, as some-

[1] See, for instance, the Greek song of "The Bridge of Arta," *Greek Folk-songs*, p. 81; and "The Monastery of Argis" in Alexandri's *Ballades de la Roumanie*.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

787 825 The cries of wild beasts and birds, and also the circumstances under which they are heard, or the animals themselves met with, have also their signification. If wolves howl in packs, it betokens, in some districts, a death; in others, severe frost. To meet a snake before sunrise, or about sunset, augurs the death of a relative. If the turtle-dove, which in Middle Albania builds in the towns and villages, sits on a roof and coos, it announces to the inmates the return of a relative from a foreign land. When a cuckoo, however, sits there and sings, or an owl hoots there, it betokens a death in the house. The croak of a raven in the vicinity of a house, or the hoot of an owl, announces to the expectant mother the birth of a girl. Sparrows flying in large flocks are held to be a sign of severe cold.

787 Various auguries are also drawn from the arrival in spring of the birds of passage, and the circumstances under which they are first seen. For instance, to see the first swallow or turtle-dove before breaking one's fast in the morning portends sickness. Accordingly, about the time when these birds are expected, and more particularly on the 1st of May, the precaution is taken of placing by the bedside a small piece of bread, which is eaten immediately on awakening in order to avoid any such risk. In Northern Albania, on the contrary, it is held that to see while fasting the first swallow brings luck. Here, too, when a mother, whose child has been born with a running sore, sees the first stork, she places on her baby's head a stone, saying:

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4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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789 needle, a warning evidently to other fleas of the fate awaiting them.

The women in South Albania twist together a [751] number of coloured threads and tie them round the children's wrists and necks, in order to preserve them from sunburn or sunstroke, and draw a similar thread along the threshold of the house. They also roll up tightly little balls of rag, at which they stitch assiduously with a needle and thread; and when asked what they are doing, they reply, "We are sewing up the plague, snakes, and sickness." On this day no vegetables are eaten, the sweet cakes and dishes, in which the Ritza alone indulge, being believed to ensure a good [777] summer. The whole of this month is a close time for the ravens, as to kill one would bring bad luck to the vintage.

527 The North Albanians begin their year on the 1st
789 of March. On this day the cattle are decked with gar-
777 lands of flowers, and the Ghegs not only tie threads of
[805] many colours on the wrists and necks of their children, but themselves also wear one of red silk on the little finger of the right hand and the great toe of the right foot. When the first swallow has been seen, they take off these threads, and hang them on the rose-bushes, in order that the swallows may take them to their nests.
[177] Von Hahn is of opinion that this graceful little custom is not indigenous, and it may indeed have been partly borrowed, either from the Bulgarians, or, through the neighbouring Vlachs, from the Roumanians, with whom, as I have already mentioned,[1] a similar usage exists. While I was at Salonica, one

[1] Vol. I. p. 335.

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
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A 754 of the blood on a silver coin, wrap it up, and wear it as an amulet. It will protect you from all blood-sucking shtrigas.

A [163 761] Shtrigas especially like the blood of children. Child mortality in all Balkan lands is exceedingly high. It is not unusual to find women who have borne from eight to twelve children, of whom none, or but one or two, survive. Nor could I ever make them believe that it was the way in which the babes were kept that was the real cause. So A [751] terrified are the mothers that the Evil Eye may fall on the child that they guard it by keeping its heavy wooden cradle wrapped in a thick woollen coverlet. No Evil Eye, and no ray of light or breath of fresh A [853 777] air, can penetrate. When suckling, the mother takes the cradle on her knees or kneels over it, and raises just enough of the rug to enable her to give the breast; both cradle and child are hung with amulets. The M 754 same method, too, is popular in Montenegro and Bosnia. I have seen luckless infants as white as bleached celery, slowly pining away; but 853 the poor mother believed the pining due to a shtriga, who had put a curse on her breast and poisoned her milk, or had looked at the A 755 child with an Evil Eye. Only the very strong survive. Marko used to prescribe washing the child with a decoction of walnut leaves. Neither he nor anyone else would believe me when I begged for fresh air and sunlight.

A 754 755 Only she who has caused the evil can undo it. My old friend, Tony Precha, who was a mine of old-world lore, told me how a shtriga was forced to do this: "The child of our neighbour was slowly pining away. It was the work of a shtriga. One day it died. I saw it cold and dead. The father, in a fury, shouted that he knew who had killed it. He A [681] rushed out and caught a woman and dragged her in. She screamed and denied that she had done it. He dragged her to the dead child, crying, 'Spit in its mouth!' She refused, and struggled and screamed. If she did not spit before the sun went down it would be too late. She knew this, and that was why she would not spit, for it was already late. Then the father, in despair, put his pistol to her head and shouted, 'Spit or I fire!' She spat. The father threw her out of the door. Then we watched the child. Very slowly it began to revive, and in three hours it was quite well. The father had saved it by acting at once." And Tony saw this with his own eyes.

How apt are most of us to believe that *post hoc* is *propter hoc*.

A 754 776 777 In Albania evil spirits are most active in the spring. Garlic is tied round children's necks on or about Shrove Tuesday as a special precaution. In Shala, and, I believe, other tribes, the women tie a black cord with three knots in it to the doorposts along with a pair of scissors, the wool-carding comb, and some berries (species unknown). This is not merely to protect the house, but to prevent shtrigas and bad spirits

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Gospels. In Serbian these are called "Zapis." They are enclosed in silver cases called by the Turkish word "hamaljija" both by Serbs and Albanians; or they are sewn up in leather. Such leather cases are usually triangular. Most of the Catholic women of Zadrima, Albania, wore two brass crucifixes on a chain and a leathern triangular amulet case. Such cases are often fixed to the horns of oxen. When a Christian finds a Christian "writing" has done no good, he will go on the sly to beg one from a Moslem, and vice versa.

Priests, both Orthodox and Catholic, write an immense number of amulets, fold the paper neatly in a triangle, thread it on a string, and direct that it shall be tied over the spot where the pain is felt; and peasants will tramp many miles in search of this help. At Ochrida, where I had to examine the patients before the doctor saw them, I came across an up-to-date development of this treatment. A child was brought with his neck thickly swathed. When the wrappings were off, his neck was an alarming dull purple, as though horribly contused. The amulet had been written in copying ink and had come off on his skin! The mother fondly hoped its magic had soaked in.

In both Albania and Montenegro I have seen Moslems flock to a church or a well-known Christian shrine in search of a cure. At the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity, on the festival day at Plevlje, I saw two Turkish gendarmes bring in a lunatic with his arms tied behind him and lay him in front of the altar during service in order that he might be cured.

Several thousand peasants, Orthodox, Catholic, and Moslem, used to crowd on Trinity Sunday to the shrine of St. Vasil of Ostrog in Montenegro—a purely Montenegrin saint. The shrine of another local saint at the Piperski monastery is also in great repute. The best way to obtain a cure is to pass the night lying on the ground, with the head beneath the coffin, holding the relics. For this privilege a high fee was asked. At Ostrog I was told that a Moslem stricken with paralysis had been brought from Mostar on a mule, and had paid twenty-five napoleons to pass the night thus. Next day he was well and returned home happy. But he was an unbelieving Moslem, and soon declared he did not believe the saint had cured him: he had got well of himself. Next morning he awoke again paralysed, and the twenty-five napoleons were under his pillow. The saint withdrew the cure and returned the fee.

An amulet with a good writing on it works good; but evil writing can in the same way work evil.

While I was in Scutari a Turkish officer fell in love with a Catholic girl. He acted honourably and asked her hand of her parents. To their horror the girl not only wished to marry him, but she went to the

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
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Some Tribal Origins, Laws, and Customs of the Balkans

In Bosnia a remedy for coughs was to burn oak-galls and inhale the smoke.

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In all districts that I visited in the Balkans I found mud used to dress wounds by the common people; but never heard of a case of tetanus, though I have had hundreds of wounded through my hands. The land is very poorly, or not at all manured, which may explain this fact. The Austrian doctor in Scutari told me that in seven years he had had but two cases—both came up the river on ships, so were not local infections; also, though "Albanian women are not so well cared for at childbirth as an Austrian cow," he had never seen a case of puerperal fever, and believed neither the tetanus nor the puerperal-fever germs had reached these districts.

But with these two exceptions the Balkans are decimated with disease. It is a mistake to imagine that a rough, simple life produces health.

M A 751 164

The apparent sturdiness of the survivors blinds the outsider to the intensity of the struggle for existence and its mass of victims. Compulsory vaccination has immensely reduced small-pox in many districts. It is interesting to see how an epidemic will sweep up to the vaccination line—and there stop short. But exposure, hunger, and toil wear out many a peasant in early middle age; and disease takes a heavy toll as well. The two worst Balkan scourges are tuberculosis and syphilis. In Montenegro and in Albania there are districts where every individual is reputed to be infected with the latter. So, too, in Bosnia, and there alone it was being scientifically combated by the Austrian medical staff.

H 164

Of tuberculosis the Bosnian doctor—a Vienna-trained man—with whom I worked in Montenegro said: "We South Slavs are the most tuberculous people in Europe. Thirty per cent. of us are badly infected. I do not count an 'apex,' for I have one myself."

Leprosy is sometimes seen, but not often, and much skin disease is carried probably by dirt and vermin.

H 164 165

Finally, those individuals who succumb to neither disease nor hardship are unbelievably tough, and live on to a green old age, often active to the last. That there are as many centenarians as is popularly believed I doubt. No registers of birth have been kept and dates are fixed haphazard. A gay old boy at Rioli was said to be 102. Five years afterwards I met him again and he was 120. To prove this his family earnestly declared he must be very old, because his father lived at the time when the ancient Romans—those people who made the bits of money you dig up out of the ground—were living at Podgoritza. Others were grandfathers at the time of the Russo-Turkish War; of one it was said no one could remember him without white hair, and so